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ABSTRACT

Debates over the separation or accommodation of religion and government have divided the United States since its founding. This collection of over 70 primary documents represents the ideas and issues on the interpretation of the United States Constitution's First Amendment clauses pertaining to establishment and free exercise of religion. The collection is divided into five parts: (1) "Colonial Roots of Religious Liberty, 1606-1776"; (2) "Religious Liberty in the Founding of the United States, 1776-1791"; (3) "The Constitutional Right to Free Exercise of Religion, 1791-1991"; (4) "The Constitutional Prohibition of an Establishment of Religion, 1791-1991"; and (5) "Constitutional Issues on Freedom of Religion, 1991-1998." Introductory and explanatory text accompanies each document to help students understand the nature of the conflicts, the issues being litigated, the social and cultural pressures that shaped each debate, and the manner in which the passions of individual government officials, justices, and presidents affected policy development. Contains a glossary and categorical listings of Supreme Court cases treated in the collection. (BT)

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